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24 October 1970

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Atmosphere in Chile

Approved for Release  
July 2000

A. SANTIAGO

The attitudes of the population could be summed up as in general resigned to accept the new Allende government. Business and hotel people (when they had the feeling they could speak rather freely to a foreigner) indicated that they viewed the future prospects with deep concern and that they had serious reservations over the incoming government. The members of the upper groups, indicated their belief that even if Allende took office, the government would be of short duration. Four or five taxi drivers along with others of the working class, indicated that they were quite uncertain over what might take place.

Comment regarding the local economic picture, the drain of bank reserves was all closely tied in with this feeling of uncertainty which was building up to tension with the alleged rightist bombings and finally the arrest of Major Marshall.

Up to the time of my departure, there was no apparent change in what might be considered as the "regular" treatment of businessmen and tourists. Hotels, transportation, restaurants, etc. were carrying on in a normal manner in so far as could be noted by a "tourist". It was expected that the recent abnormal demand for dollars would be reduced and curtailed by the decision of the government cutting the amount of dollars that could be legally purchased by those Chileans traveling abroad. Airline passenger bookings out of Santiago to Buenos Aires, Europe, and the U. S. were beginning to decline when I departed last Tuesday, 20 October.

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B. CONCEPCION

An atmosphere around the university of complete freedom for Marxism. City gave impression of order and progress. ~~stay~~ stay not of sufficient duration to provide any firm impressions.

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